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ABSTRACT

This monograph offers a progress report on reading in America. The monograph considers the idea that contemporary research indicates that competent readers are constructive and discusses reading habits of adults and children, data on 17-year-olds from the National Assessment of Educational Progress, reading instruction, reader response theory, and reading assessment. The monograph concludes with recommendations based on contemporary research: (1) teachers need to be empowered to continue to do the jobs they are doing; (2) the definition of the concept of "being literate" should be widened; (3) wide, self-selected, independent reading must be a prominent objective in reading instruction; and (4) the needs of all students must be met as society becomes increasingly more diverse. Three figures of data and a list of publications by the authors are attached. (RS)

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READING IN AMERICA: A PROGRESS REPORT

**James Flood
Diane K. Lapp**

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**Sixth University Research Lecture
San Diego State University**

Graduate Division and Research

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The University Research Lecture Series

The University Research Lecture series recognizes San Diego State University faculty members for outstanding achievement in research and scholarship and fosters continuation of such accomplishments. Distinguished resident faculty scholars are able to share their knowledge more broadly with the academic community and the community at large through the presentation of all-university graduate colloquia on generic problems of research and graduate education. These colloquia combine open lectures of general interest with smaller seminars and workshops for the graduate students and faculty who are actively pursuing research in areas related to the colloquia topics. The series is sponsored by the Graduate Division and Research and the University Research Council and is supported in part through Instructionally Related Activities Funds. Each academic discipline or department which offers a graduate degree at San Diego State University may nominate resident faculty to participate in the series. Exposure to and interaction with such distinguished researchers is an integral part of the instructional experience for all graduate students at San Diego State University. Each of the lectures in the series will be published to assure its increased availability to the students and faculty of the university and to the community at large. This book, *Reading in America: A Progress Report*, originated as San Diego State University's Sixth University Research Lecture.

President Thomas B. Day:

I am delighted to welcome you to San Diego State University's sixth university research lecture. The University Research lecture series is a project sponsored by the Graduate Division and Research under the auspices of the University Research Council, and is supported by instructionally related activities funds. The series was developed to honor annually resident faculty scholars for outstanding achievement in research and scholarship. Award recipients who are designated university research lecturer for the academic year deliver a general public lecture and engage in a variety of academic activities throughout the year designed to share their research more broadly with the academic community and the community at large. Each academic discipline or department has an opportunity to nominate a faculty member for this award. A faculty committee with representatives from each of the seven colleges makes the final recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate Division and Research, who selects the individual or individuals on behalf of the research council.

Today, James Flood and Diane Lapp, professors of teacher education in the Reading and Language Development Program, two internationally known experts in reading and language development, will present the sixth university research lecture. I am confident that the University Research Lecture, honoring our own faculty, will continue to be an important part of our academic tradition.

I would now like to present Dr. Brad Bartel, Associate Dean of the Graduate Division and Research, who will introduce our honored speakers. Thank you.

Dean Brad Bartel:

Thank you, President Day. Dr. Diane Lapp, Professor of Reading and Language Development in the College of Education, has taught in elementary and middle schools in Michigan and Ohio. Her Bachelor of Science degree in Education is from

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Ohio Northern University, the Master of Science degree from Western Michigan University, and her Doctor of Education from Indiana University. She has served as a consultant, supervisor, and evaluator for public school reading programs throughout the United States, and she has co-authored, with James Flood, *Teaching Reading to Every Child* and *Teaching Students to Read*, two texts on reading and language instructional methods. Dr. Lapp has also co-authored a language arts methods text, *Language Skills in Elementary Education*. She is also one of the editors of the *Handbook of Research in the Teaching of the Language Arts*. She has served as the editor of three international reading association texts, has been a member of the editorial board of *The Reading Teacher*, the *Journal of Reading Behavior*, and *Reading Research and Instruction*. She is a frequent contributor to professional journals, has also co-authored the elementary strategies column of *Reading Today*, a newspaper published bi-monthly by the International Reading Association. Dr. Lapp received the outstanding teacher award in 1981 from the Department of Teacher Education at San Diego State University, and the outstanding teacher and researcher award in 1984 from the Alumni Association of San Diego State University.

Dr. James Flood is also professor of Reading and Language Development. We know from his brother Frank, who is in attendance today, that Jim's father was primarily responsible for his love of learning. His father was a publisher who had all of the children involved with writing, literature, and publishing. Professor Flood received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the Catholic University of America, the Master of Arts from New York University, and the Doctor of Philosophy from Stanford University. Prior to his university career, he had taught in preschool, elementary, and secondary schools. He has been a Fulbright Scholar in Portugal. He is the co-author with Diane Lapp of the two texts mentioned previously, as well as co-editor of the *Handbook of Research and the Teaching of Language Arts*. He had edited two volumes for the International Reading Association, and has served on the review boards of *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Reading Behavior* and *Reading Psychology*. He is currently on the Board of Directors of the National Reading Conference, and Dr. Flood is a frequent contributor to professional journals in reading and language arts education.

We are here today to honor two of their achievements: The first is obviously the quality and quantity of research devoted to the understanding of reading development. Together, they have seven books published, dozens of articles, over 150 presentations, and over one million dollars in funded research. The research spanning twenty years has greatly enhanced the discipline's knowledge base on a topic of national importance: reading and literacy. Secondly, we honor them as collaborative researchers. This is the first time in the six-year history of the University Research Lectureship that two individuals are being honored. Collaborative research is often the hallmark of research within social science disciplines. We honor two individuals who have worked together as a well-oiled research machine for two decades, proving that individual academic competition or gender differences need not have to come in

the way of scholarly work. They also exemplify the very best in the teacher/scholar model—faculty who are devoted and excellent teachers, as well as committed to their research. Although their social backgrounds are somewhat different—Diane raised in a small Ohio town and Jim in the middle of New York City—they have blended over the years into a composite academic persona.

One anecdote about this blending effect will illustrate how this collaboration borders on the metaphysical. Several years ago they were asked to be keynote speakers at a national conference. Because of their hectic schedules, they arrived at the convention right before their speech—Professor Flood from San Diego and Professor Lapp from a previous speaking engagement in Connecticut. Jim stood at the back of the convention hall during their introduction while Diane arrived at the side door. The introduction was made, and as they climbed to the stage from different directions, they looked at each other in amazement. Jim was wearing a blue blazer. Diane was wearing a blue blazer. Jim had on a pair of gray pants and a white shirt, Diane a gray skirt and a white blouse, Jim a red tie and Diane a red scarf. As the applause died down, they approached the podium. Knowing that their similar attire would not go unnoticed, Jim spoke first. "You know, we are often asked, 'What is the key to our successful partnership for so many years?' We have thought about this many times ourselves, and we can only come to one conclusion." Diane approached the microphone, scanned the audience with a mischievous twinkle in her eye, then with great style and grace, she calmly explained: "Great minds think alike."

I do not know whether the story is apocryphal, but it certainly illustrates an aspect of their collaborative research. Their strength rests with bringing diversity through life experiences to their research effort, combined with harmony of end result. Mr. President, members of the faculty, students, staff, and friends of the University—it is with great pleasure that I introduce to you our 1989-90 University Research Lecturers, Professors James Flood and Diane Lapp.

Professor James Flood:

What a gracious introduction! Thank you very much. President Day, Dean Bartel, colleagues in the University, colleagues in the schools, friends, and family, it is a great honor for us to be here today, and we are most appreciative of this and we want to share this honor with you. We want to go on record before we begin as saying that this is something that is not done by two people; this is done by all of you with us. We want to thank you for everything that you have given us, for all the ways in which you have inspired us, and for all the ways in which you have helped us. Over the years you have made us better thinkers, you have broadened our horizons, and you have made us more critical of ourselves and of the way that we approach the world. We thank you for that.

What we would like to share with you today is some views of ours on Reading in America, a Progress Report. If you will, I know that at this point you all have a handout. What we would like to do is start with this quote from James Russell Lowell,

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that we think encompasses many of the things that we believe about literacy and reading:

Have you ever rightly considered what the mere ability to read means? That it is the key which admits us to the whole world of thought and fancy and imagination? To the company of saint and sage, of the wisest and the wittiest at their wisest and wittiest moment? That it enables us to see with the keenest eyes, hear with the finest ears, and listen to the sweetest voices of all times?

As we reflect on those words, and some of the other quotes that we'll have for you today, it certainly appears to us that the gift of reading is a tremendous gift that has been given to all of us. We feel it is our responsibility, yours and ours, to give this gift to the next generation. This is the gift that unlocks all doors. This is the gift which really does welcome us to the company of the sage, the sagest, the wittiest, the wisest, the saints. It is through reading that we feel that people become their most human. It is through reading that we achieve our greatest potential, so we thank you for sharing this day with us, and sharing these thoughts with us, and what we wanted to talk with you about is where as a nation we are in reading. We want to rejoice, we want to celebrate our successes, and we want to look to the future to see how we can do this job even better. I think you are going to be delighted with some of the data that we are going to share with you that does rejoice, that does celebrate our successes, because I think that it is time to do that.

What we want to start with today is a discussion of where we are today. As we begin this, we want you to reflect upon yourselves. Here we have an audience of scholarly people. We have an audience of competent readers. When you hear some of these data, you are going to be delighted, because it is you, it is you who are really the people who know how to do this. You really are competent readers. What we have learned in our career is that the best educational research is that research which is grounded in reality, which is common-sensical, which is research done by people who keep their feet on the ground, so I think what we need to do is stop and pause and reflect for a moment on our successes as readers. What is it that you do as a reader? What is it? What are the ingredients that make you as successful as you are? Can we tease these out and make some sense of them so that we can stop and pause and reflect and observe what these processes are, so that we can form a composite and then start talking about how we might do this job even better?

The first of these—where we are today—contemporary research informs us that competent readers are constructive. They are meaning-makers in the reading process. You know, when you stop and you pause, and think about this for a minute, there are some literary analysts, some rhetoricians, some literary critics, who would suggest that there is no such thing as a poem. A poem only becomes a poem when there's a reader. Think about this for a moment; think about this as we share some simulations that will help you to realize that reading is an act of construction. We have found in

our lives, in our careers, that many children are participants of reading clinics, reading labs, Title I programs, because they don't understand that reading is an active process. Reading is a process in which the person, the reader, has to do the work. It is a process whereby we have to create meaning; meaning isn't only on the page. The page is just filled with squiggles, and somewhere over time we came to some agreement about what those squiggles represent. The reader is the meaning-maker. It is not to suggest that the writer isn't a meaning-maker; of course, the writer is a meaning-maker. When comprehension happens, it happens because the reader creates meaning and forms some type of communication with the writer. It's a contract between readers and writers. Let's illustrate this point for a moment.

Think about some of your own experiences. In the last few years, educators have been talking about and studying metacognition which means thinking about thinking. When we think about thinking, we monitor our thoughts. We edit our thoughts. We revise our thoughts. We talk to ourselves inside our heads. That's what a competent reader does. That's what you do all the time. Think for a moment—you open a book, you're reading along, it's a nice novel, you're interested in it, you finish page 18, you flip to page 19, and at the top of the page, it says, "And Catherine entered the room." What happens to you? What happens inside your head? You say things to yourself like, "Oh, yeah, I remember who Catherine is;" or you say things to yourself like, "Oh, oh, she's back again. Mmmmm, trouble ahead;" or you say to yourself, "I can't remember who Catherine is." What do you do when you can't remember who Catherine is? You talk to yourself, you monitor your comprehension, and you start flipping back in the book. That flipping is an overt, physical manifestation of an internal psychological behavior. Your fingers doing the walking tell us that you are talking to yourself inside your head. That's what a competent reader does. That's what you do.

Let me show you some examples for a moment. As I flash some overheads on the screen, I want you to think what's happening inside your head. As I flash that on the screen, what's happening in your head? What does that mean? Some of you are saying, "It's a stop sign. I see an octagon." Now, the point is this. Is there only one meaning to this orthographic representation, to the symbol? Is there a single meaning to this? I think some of you say, "Of course it's a stop sign. I know what that means. I come to a full stop, and then I proceed." Now, if we were in a smaller setting, we could talk to each other. Suddenly somebody would raise his or her hand and would say, "Ah, as soon as you flashed that on, I had this thought. You know, I live out in the country, and when I see a stop sign, I don't really stop. I sort of slow down, and I kind of go through it." Somebody else would say, "As soon as you flashed that up there, I thought, 'Last Sunday, I went through a stop sign. I can tell you the whole story.'" As soon as I flashed that up there, somebody else said, "Computer. Oh my, did I leave my computer on at home?" All right. Somebody else is saying, "As soon as you flashed that on, I saw red."

Look what's happening. The constructive reader, the competent reader starts building. You start building. That's what a construction person does. You start building. That building is based upon all that you are. It's based upon the background knowledge that you have, all of your experiences, your values, all of those things that are in your head. Something that appears as constrained as this isn't. There isn't a single meaning to this. Yes, there's a universally accepted meaning, but then all of us have degrees of this meaning because of our personal experiences.

Let me just show you one more. Let's pretend for a moment that I gave each of you a book of short stories. I said to you, turn to the first short story. Let's do this together. You've got the book in front of you. Turn to the first short story. Let's all look at the first sentence of the first short story together. Are you ready? Okay. Thanksgiving always meant going to Grandma's house. What happens inside your head? You can't stop yourself. This is what the competent reader does. You can't help yourself. All of a sudden, some of you are saying things like, "Ahhhhh, as soon as you flashed that on I saw my grandmother, and in that picture, I'm eight years old. Oh, my grandmother's wearing that blue dress again. Ah, I can see her. She has the flour all over the front of her apron. She's got a little bit in her hair." Somebody else is saying, "As soon as you flashed that on, I had a thought. I thought, gee, we never went to Grandma's house for Thanksgiving, but we went to . . ." Somebody else is saying, "Ahhhhh, as soon as you put that on, I couldn't deal with it. It's too painful. Grandma just passed away. I can't deal with that right now." Somebody else said, "Over the woods and through the snow." Somebody else went, "Ooooooh, what a terrible beginning, you know. What a terrible example of writing." You can't help yourself. Whatever you said to yourself—that's what happens during the constructing-meaning experience. You can't stop yourself. Boom. You bring to the surface, you access your prior knowledge. That's what a competent reader does. All of this that we want to talk to you about today is something that we need to reflect upon because this is what is important in the teaching of reading. This is what good readers do. We have to look at good readers to find out what we need to do in terms of instruction.

What we want to do is just tell you a brief story at this point. A few months ago, we were really very privileged. We had the opportunity to go to New York to a black-tie dinner. It was a wonderful affair. Robert Maxwell was being honored as the humanitarian of the year for the B'nai B'rith Association. It was the Anti-defamation League. It was a wonderful honor. He stood up there and gave his acceptance speech, and so on. It was really very interesting and exciting for us. Art Buchwald was the emcee, and Howard Baker was there, and Ethel Kennedy was there, and Cary, and so on, so it was really very interesting. It was a fun affair. Maxwell started telling about his life, telling a story. You know, those of you who know Maxwell know that he really has quite a background. He's had five different names in his lifetime, and he's done all sorts of things and built an interesting empire, and so on. He currently owns Macmillan Publishing Company. Well, at this honor, the emcee said, "Tell us—don't just give us an acceptance speech—tell us a little bit about you," so he said, "Well

I want to tell you a story. When I sort of arrived, I was relatively young. I was a young man in Europe" (he's British), he said. "I was a young man in Europe, and I was living in England. At that time I learned Russian, you know." I think all of you know he is from Eastern Europe. He said, "I learned Russian, and I knew Russian for a very long time, so I spent a lot of time in the Soviet Union. I spent time with Gorbachev. Gorbachev and I sort of rose up together, both of us sort of coming in at the same time. We became fast friends, and we were really buddies. He spent a lot of time in England, and I spent a lot of time in the Soviet Union, and we really got to know each other real well. Well, as he rose in politics he would always call me in. You know, we'd have these great parties and festivities and so on, and we'd have very late-night vodka drinking, and so on. He'd say to me, 'Tell me what's going on in the West. You know, we need to know how westerners think,' and so on. We would talk, and we would solve the problems of the world, and so on and so forth." Well, as the time grew over the years, Gorbachev really started rising in politics and finally the last time that Maxwell was there, he said to him, "Bob, this is probably the last time that you can come into this inner circle. You know, they get a little nervous. You really can't be here anymore. But since this is the last time, let me really pick your brain," so they went on and on. They were talking and going on in Russian and lots of vodka, and so on and so forth, really talking. He said, "Now, I guess this is it. This is my last question to you. You know, I want to know, Bob, how you think the world would have been different if Khrushchev had been assassinated in '63 instead of Kennedy?" You know, they started talking, and they were speaking in Russian. Then they started reflecting on it, and then he thought about it, he thought about it, he thought about it, and he said, "Gee, I don't know. How do think, Mr. Gorbachev? What do you think would have happened? How would the world have been different?" Well, they went back and forth, and they went back and forth, and they went back and forth. Finally Maxwell said, "Well, I guess, I guess I have an answer." He said, "No, no, no, you try it," so he said, "Yeah, well, I guess I do have an answer after all." He said, "Thinking about this, one thing—do you want the short answer or the long answer?" He said, "Give me the short answer for heaven's sake." All right, so he said, "Well, I guess I can say safely that if that had happened, Jack Kennedy probably wouldn't have married Mrs. Khrushchev."

All right, your response indicates to me that you did all sorts of things. You constructed meaning. You put all of those pieces together to figure out what was going on. You inferred, you analyzed, you synthesized, you made all of that happen. That's what a constructive listener does. That's what a constructive reader does. You put it together to make it a package. Well, the second point that we want to make is that not only does the reader construct meaning, but the reader is purposeful. The competent reader is purposeful. Think for a moment about yourselves. You always have a purpose when you're reading. Think about it. Would you agree with that? Do you always have a purpose when you're reading? Sometimes you said, well, no, sometimes I just pick up a book. Well, you really do. When you just pick up that book

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sort of idly, your purpose is a general informal purpose. You usually want to be entertained. Think about other times. Sometimes you pick up the newspaper, and you want to find out what time the movie is going to be shown. Other times, you pick up the newspaper, and you are looking for another specific piece of information. You have purposes, and those purposes change. Now, let's think about this for a minute. Sometimes when we think about this, we need to think of this pretty broadly. All people need to have purposes when they are reading. But these purposes change, and sometimes the purposes change and we don't even know it. What I want to do with you now is share a poem. I want you to establish a purpose for the reading of this poem. We are going to read this poem together. This poem is called "Incendiary." Think about what your purpose is. The name of this poem is "Incendiary." Watch what happens when we read this poem.

That one small boy
With a face like pallid cheese
And burnt out little eyes
Could make a blaze as
Ragin' fierce and huge
As red and gold and zany yellow
As the one that spoiled three thousand
Guineas worth of property and crops
At Godwin's farm on Saturday is frightened
As fact and metaphor.
An ordinary match intended for
The lighting of a pipe or kitchen fire
Misused may set a whole menagerie of
Flame fanged tigers roaring hungrily
And frightening too.
That one small boy should set the sky on fire
And choke the stars to heat such skinny limbs
And such a little heart
Which would have been content
With one warm kiss,
Had there been anyone to offer this.

All right, now, let's think about purpose. The first time in reading this, we should establish a purpose. Our first purpose when dealing with right might be, "Wow, that's sad." Some of you are dealing with, "I know a child like that." That's where you are. That's your purpose right now. What would happen if we went through it again is a really important point. If we went through this again, what would happen is that you are now ready to see a flame-fanged tiger roaring hungrily. Now you are ready to see aut's craft. Now you are ready to see all sorts of color images. Now you are ready

to deal with sentences like, "as fact and metaphor"—other similar phrases. But until then you weren't. Your purpose changes as you read. Now, you want to reread and say, "Wow, did that say what I thought it said?" Now, you're ready to go back and read for detail. This is what a constructive reader does.

Professor Diane Lapp:

Effective readers also bring to their active reading lots of strategies. I want to show you how good you are as strategic readers. Let's read the passage. The procedure is actually quite simple. First you arrange things into different groups. Of course one pile may be sufficient depending on how much there is to do. If you have to go somewhere else due to lack of facilities that is the next step. Otherwise you are pretty well set. It is important not to overdo things. That is, it is better to do too few things at once than too many. In the short run this may not seem important, but complications may easily arise. A mistake can be expensive as well. At first the whole procedure will seem complicated. Soon, however, it will become just another facet of life. It is difficult to foresee any end to the necessity for this task in the immediate future, but then one can never tell. After the procedure is completed, one arranges the materials into groups again. Then they can be put into their appropriate places. Eventually, they will be used once more, and the whole cycle will have to be repeated. However, that is part of life. What were you doing? If I said to you, "Now I want you to do this," what would you get up and start doing? Now, read it again with expression. See if you can get it. I want you as you start to reread it again to think about all the things that are happening in your mind. First of all, you're bringing to bear lots of strategies that you have. You are decoding all of those words. You are making meaning out of those words. You are synthesizing information, and now you can begin to act. The interesting thing is that many of you would do several different actions. Let me ask you, how many of you would start to do your laundry? Some of you would start to do your laundry. If we had time now and went through the audience, we would find that lots of interesting things could be done from this little piece of text. But the interesting thing is what you were doing with the text, how you were searching through your storehouse of categories, your storehouse of information to find what it is that you were doing. You were doing that at the same time that you were bringing to bear all of your reading strategies. You are able to do that because you are all such well practiced readers. You are all real good at this. You are almost as good at this as you are at talking. When children begin to learn to talk before they ever say their first whole sentence, they have been practicing language for about 20,000 hours. They babble, they coo, they try sentences, they are given wonderful reinforcement from their first teachers, their parents, and others in their world, and they learn how to talk. Well, the same thing happens in the process of reading. You practice and practice and practice. You learn all of these strategies, you synthesize them, and you come to a task like this and you do it so automatically. It takes lots of practice. Think of all the things that you've read in the last few days, in the last week. How many of you have read

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a newspaper? A magazine? A journal? A piece of non-fiction? Fiction? Your tax documents? You could even get good at that if you practiced a little bit. How many of you read directions for getting here? Maps? Just think what fine readers you are, of the repertoire of strategies that you have in order to read.

Where are we today? We are doing quite a good job at reading. In fact, did you know that 63 million people read 1,600 daily newspapers? Americans really like to read newspapers. *USA Today* has been the most widely read newspaper in the U.S. since 1985. In 1989 its circulation was over 4.5 million. When it was introduced, *USA Today* was entirely different. It became very popular. They had short articles, still do, lots of colorful articles, information that appealed to a wide population of people. Now, look what's happened in 1989. If you review a current copy of the *Wall Street Journal*, you'll see that it has many of the same characteristics. It has more popular articles, appeals to a wider population of people, has colorful pages and short articles, so that people on the run, people on the move can do a lot of reading. Americans love to read newspapers.

How about magazines? Of all the magazines that are published in America, the most widely read is *The Reader's Digest* with 16.5 million readers followed closely by *TV Guide* with 16.3 million readers. *The National Inquirer* is tenth place with a readership of over 4 million. Inquiring minds do want to know. Reading is big business. Reading keeps publications alive. Let me show you something else. In 1988, Americans bought, looked at, that's not millions, that's billions of dollars worth of books. They bought 11.5 billion dollars worth of books. In 1977 they bought 5.1 billion dollars worth of books. Look how it has increased since 1977. What do you think? Americans are reading.

Well, now, some people would say yes, but there's only a few people doing it, and my heavens, we're competing with everything else, and my heavens, people don't like to read. Well, Jim and I didn't believe that either so we looked in the Bowker Index, and we found out that Americans spend a lot of their fun money on reading. They spend for entertainment and reading about \$1,100 a year—entertainment a thousand and that includes concerts and picture shows and plays and all of the things that people spend their money on. Look at reading. \$140 or 12% of their fun money is spent on reading, so thank you, teachers. Americans are reading, and when they aren't visiting all of the libraries—30,000—when they aren't reading the newspapers, when they aren't reading all of those periodicals, they are home pouring through all those pieces of domestic mail that get delivered to them every day. It's a good thing that we've started to recycle.

Americans are reading. Now, what about our children? We're real happy with this statistic, because it shows you that of the average nine-year-old children, third- or fourth-graders, 93% of them in 1988 have the basic reading skills that they need to succeed at their grade level. Now, think about that for a second. Reflect back to 1971, because in 1971 10% of our children were lacking the basic reading skills. Now, I first want to focus on the positive and say 10% were lacking, but 90% had the reading

strategies that they needed in the fourth grade. I want you to think about that for a second, because that is across the whole country. If you think about who those children are, they're from diverse cultures, diverse languages. America doesn't just attempt to educate some of their children. We attempt to educate all of them. In fact, we beg them, push them, plead with them, and force them to stay in school all the way up through twelfth grade. Not just a few of them. We want all of our children to have that kind of an education. We are also closing the gap on this because it is never good enough for us until all of our children can do the best that we hope for them. After 1971, when a group of educators met to talk about what we could do better, the early-parent programs were initiated, all of the Head Start programs. Lots of funding was initiated so that we could better concentrate on the early years and the preschool years with our children. This has really been happening.

Now, I want to share with you one more piece of data, to show you that we are also closing the gap on high-school graduates. Take a look at this—look at what is happening from 1940 to 1985. Eighty-six percent of the population is now graduating from high school as compared to 38% in 1940. What do you think about that? We are closing the gap, but you know we are not finished yet. We will never be finished until 100% of our students graduate from high school. Unfortunately instead of the media applauding teachers and saying, "Great job, nice going, you've done a great job since 1940," we say, "What are you doing about that other 14?" A visit to American classrooms is evidence that wonderful learning experiences occur every single day.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress is housed in Princeton, New Jersey, and it's primary purpose is to study different areas of instruction. For example, every four years a comparative study is conducted with an area of the curriculum that has been studied four years earlier. For example, in 1984, 1988, and also 1989 reading was studied. All areas of the curriculum are studied on alternate years. The sample populations for these studies are children aged nine, thirteen, and seventeen from all economic groups and regions of the country. Jim and I want to share some of the current data with you about seventeen-year-olds and how well seventeen-year-olds are reading in the United States.

James Flood:

We wanted to start off with a note of gratitude. We wanted to say, "See how you all got here, you all read the invitation, you got here on time." We want to say thank you, teachers, for letting everybody learn how to read so they could actually get here."

Well, what we want to do now is just present the data from the National Assessment. What the National Assessment does is the following: They devise five levels of reading that contain increasingly complex texts for students to read, starting with rudimentary text, which is the ability to carry out simple discrete reading tasks. Seventeen-year-olds were asked to read a text that looked like this. This was the rudimentary. They were reading it to themselves silently. It says, "Here is a puzzle. See if you can solve it. There is something that usually has four legs and that you can

sit on. It can be made of wood or metal. Most people have several of these in their homes. Some are soft, and some are hard. You usually sit on one of these when you sit down to eat. What is it?" The answer indeed is A. That was the first type of text that the students were asked to read. Here are the data. How many seventeen-year-olds were able to do this? One hundred percent. One hundred percent of seventeen-year-olds were able to read text that looked like this.

This wasn't a riddle that went through the air and we asked people to guess. This was a reading test. Note, if you will, that some of these sentences go on for two lines. It is not a difficult passage, but it is a passage. It is not single words. You have to do many things to put that together, in order to be able to answer that independently through silent reading. An important point here is that sometimes the popular press wants to suggest some things that just aren't so. One-hundred percent of seventeen-year-olds in this study were able to read this. We think that sometimes our message gets heard better when we put some stories around it. Eighteen months ago, we got a call from the newspaper. We were asked to comment on illiteracy in America. We said to the journalist, "What do you mean, what do you mean?" He said, "Well, you know, Johnny can't read, and now we know everybody can't read, and we have all these functional illiterates in America, and everything is falling apart, and so on." We said, "Whoa, slow down." He said, "Well, you know, people who just can't read any of the words at all." What we said was, "We don't know any. We don't know any people like that." He was horrified, and he didn't really want that as the answer. We said, "If you want to talk about literacy, we're happy to. But you've got to talk about literacy for whom, for what purpose, in what context? What are the conditions of literacy?" Well, he wanted to sell his newspaper tomorrow. He didn't really want to hear that. What we want to say, and this is critical, is that in America, by and large, there really are very, very few people who can't read words, who can't read a simple passage like this. We are not in any way suggesting that there aren't any people. Of course there are some people. There really aren't very many. The problem in America is not illiteracy. It's not that people can't read. If there is a problem, it is that it's aliteracy. People don't read. They can but they don't. That's what we're after in terms of forming new kind of instruction. We really know how to begin this whole process and teach people to read. What we want to do is start reflecting on the "do." We know enough about the "can." Now what we have to look at is the "do." This is the first of the five levels.

RUDIMENTARY
(LEVEL 150)

Here is a puzzle. See if you can solve it.

There is something that usually has four legs and that you can sit on. It can be made of wood or metal. Most people have several of these in their homes. Some are soft, and some are hard. You usually sit on one of these when you sit down to eat. What is this?

- A. A chair
- B. A horse
- C. A pillow
- D. A mushroom
- E. I don't know.

1. According to the article, how can you test to see if sand is really quicksand?

- A. Stick your hand into it.
- B. Step lightly on it.
- C. Poke it with a stick.
- D. Look at it.
- E. I don't know.

2. What is quicksand?

- A. Wet sand you can walk on
- B. Soupy sand you can't stand on
- C. Sand that forms clouds in the wind
- D. Dry sand which flows quickly through your fingers
- E. I don't know.

Diane Lapp:

We know that you're probably thinking, "Oh, well, that was pretty easy," so how about this one? This is the basic level of reading, which was the next level that the National Assessment asked seventeen-year-olds to read. Take a little test. Question #1: According to the article, how can you determine if sand is really quicksand? Keep track of your answer. You don't have to tell. The answer is C. Question #2: What is quicksand? The answer is B.

How well did you do? Because we have already shared with you the fact that you are real good readers, you probably did pretty well. Let me show you what is involved in that kind of reading and tell you how well seventeen-year-olds did. In that type of

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reading, one must first know a lot about reading. First of all, one must have a concept of words and letters. In addition one knows how to make meaningful sounds using letters and words. We are talking to you about the storehouse of strategies that you have. In order to answer those two questions you had to understand a sequence of information and how that sequence was related. At this level one is engaged in a more refined, more specific type of reading strategy. How well did seventeen-year-olds do? 98.5% of all seventeen-year-olds had 100% on those passages. But that isn't good enough. Every teacher in the audience is thinking, what can I do to get to that other percent and a half? What can I do to help them do better reading?

James Flood:

Now the third level is the intermediate level. There one's ability to search for specific information, interrelate ideas, and make generalizations is assessed. Seventeen-year-olds were being asked to construct meaning. This is a sample of what one of those texts look like. They start getting kind of hard. This one's called "Boxball." Okay, I'll just read a little bit of it to you. It says, "Have you ever heard of the National Boxball Association, the Los Angeles Boxball team, or Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the famous Boxball player, or have you ever heard of boxball at all? Well, it was the game that almost was. Today, we call the game basketball, of course, but it almost became known as boxball. When Dr. James Naismith, a teacher at the International YMCA training school, Springfield, Massachusetts, first invented the game in 1891, he had no name for it. He simply made up a sport that all the students could enjoy, one that could be played indoors by both boys and girls and was not as rough as football. Dr. Naismith wanted the students to experiment with the new game, but he first had to find the right kind of ball and two boxes. He decided that the players use a leather soccerball, about 28 inches around to toss into the goals. He then asked Mr. Stebbins, the superintendent, to find two boxes that had openings about nine inches across, wide enough for the soccerball. Mr. Stebbins couldn't find the right sized wooden boxes anywhere, and the time for the game came near. What happened was they were looking all over for the boxes, and lo and behold they couldn't find them. What happened? When the first game finally began, they decided to use two peach baskets that were handy" because they couldn't find the boxes, and then it goes on to tell the history of basketball.

INTERMEDIATE (Level 250)

Boxball

Have you ever heard of the National Boxball Association, the Los Angeles boxball team, or Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, the famous boxball player, or have you ever heard of boxball at all? Well, it

is the game that almost was.

Today we call the game basketball, of course, but it almost became known as boxball. When Dr. James A. Naismith, a teacher at the International YMCA Training School in Springfield, Massachusetts, first invented the game in 1891, he had no name for it. He had simply made up a sport that all his students could enjoy—one that could be played indoors by both boys and girls and was not as rough as football.

Dr. Naismith wanted his students to experiment with the new game, but he first had to find the right kind of ball and two boxes. He decided to have the players use a leather soccer ball—about twenty-eight inches around—to toss into the goals. He then asked Mr. Stebbins, the building superintendent, to find two boxes that had openings about nine inches across—wide enough for the soccer ball. But Mr. Stebbins could not find the right-sized wooden boxes anywhere, and as the time for the first game came near, there were still no goals hanging from the gymnasium balcony. Dr. Naismith finally decided to use two peach baskets that were handy. After all, he reasoned, it was only a trial game; boxes could always be found later to replace the temporary baskets.

When the first game finally began, the players enjoyed the challenge of shooting the soccer ball at the peach baskets and earning a point each time the ball went into the basket. The peach baskets did present a bit of a problem, however, since each time a goal was made, someone had to climb a ladder to retrieve the ball before the game could continue. After a few games, someone finally realized that the bottoms of the baskets could be cut out to allow the ball to fall through.

Naismith had simply called his invention “a new game,” but, because of the peach-basket goals, it soon became known as basketball. Fortunately, those peach baskets were never replaced with wooden boxes as the inventor had originally planned. What a difference it would have made had Mr. Stebbins been able to find wooden boxes for that very first game! Instead of basketball, boxball would be one of the most popular sports of all time.

Who invented the game of basketball?

- A. A Massachusetts teacher
- B. A YMCA student
- C. A building superintendent

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- D. A Los Angeles player
- E. I don't know.

What is the purpose of the article?

- A. To explain the rules of basketball
- B. To describe how much fun boxball can be
- C. To tell how basketball was invented
- D. To give a history of outdoor sports
- E. I don't know.

We can tell from the article that which of the following statements is true?

- A. Basketball was invented before football.
- B. Football was invented before basketball.
- C. Soccer was invented before football.
- D. Soccer and football were invented at the same time.
- E. I don't know.

It gets to be a fairly complex task to read this. Let's just see how well you do on these questions, okay?

Here are some of the questions that the students were asked. Who invented the game of basketball? Okay, we all know it was Dr. Naismith, but the way the question was asked is difficult. Was it a Massachusetts teacher, a YMCA student, a building superintendent, the Los Angeles player, or I don't know? All right, so now the techniques of assessment start encroaching on this process. What is the purpose of the article? We can tell from the article which of the following statements is true. All right, this actually ends up being a fairly difficult task. How well did our seventeen-year-olds do on this? Eighty-six percent of them could do it, on these types of tasks. We think that it is really important that we do spend some time on these numbers because what we are saying now is that almost everybody can do this. This is a difficult task.

Diane Lapp:

Wait until you see how hard this one is.

ADEPT
(Level 300)

Throwing the Javelin

The scent of honeysuckle seemed to linger in the air and joined itself with the sweet odor of freshly cut grass. I slipped out of my bright red sweats and flung them to the base of the tree. I picked up the javelin, stuck point down in the turf. The cross which hung about my neck swung back and forth as I stretched my arms with the javelin behind my neck. Out of habit, I stood and held the javelin in my left hand, and with the thumb on my right forced small clumps of dirt from the tip. I searched for a target. Picking a spot in a cloud moving towards me I cocked the javelin above my shoulder and regulated my breathing. My right foot was placed on the first mark and my left foot rested behind. My eyes were focused on one abstract point in the sky. Pierce it. I built up energy. Slowly, my legs flowed in motion, like pistons waiting for full power and speed. I could feel my legs churning faster, the muscles rippling momentarily, only to be solidified when foot and turf met like gears. Hitting the second mark, I escaped from the shadow of the tree and was bathed in sunlight . . . Left foot forward . . . javelin back, straight back . . . turn now, five steps . . . three, four . . . stretch, the clouds, the point . . . turn back, throw the hips . . . chest out . . . explode through the javelin . . . terminate forward motion, release.

The muscles of my right leg divided in thirds just above my knee, as the full weight of my body in motion was left to its support. Skipping, I followed through and watched the quivering javelin climb as it floated in the oncoming wind. My cross swung. For a moment, it reflected the sunlight and I lost sight of the javelin. The javelin landed quickly, piercing the ground. I heaved in exhaustion, and perspiration flowed from my face and hands. Before me the field stretched, and I attempted to evaluate my throw. I was pleased. The smell of honeysuckle again drifted into my senses and somehow I had a feeling of accomplishment I could just as easily have experienced had I thrown poorly.

Level 300, Adept

What is the main reason the writer wrote this story?

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- A. To express an athlete's feeling of failure
- B. To provide information about javelin throwing
- C. To describe how it feels to throw the javelin
- D. To encourage people to take up javelin throwing
- E. I don't know.

This is real interesting because as you are reading this I want to tell you something about readability, since in reading there are levels of difficulty of text, and those levels are made up of many factors. The two factors that make up a readability score are the following things: First, the length and difficulty of the new words, and as you look through this passage there are new words, lots of multisyllable words. Also, I want you to look back at this page to see the number of words in a sentence. Why would that matter? It matters for the following reason. As readers read, they are holding in their mind pieces of information, and they are adding to those pieces of information. A period or other forms of punctuation bring you to a rest. They allow you to synthesize the information and connect it with information that you have previously read. When you have a sentence that has fifteen, sixteen, twenty words in it, approximately every three to four words are chunked into one concept. Therefore, the mind has to be synthesizing each of those concepts, so if you are reading a sentence that has, say, twenty-one words in it, you have approximately five to seven concepts. Your mind has to be holding and synthesizing all of that information and adding to it without ever coming to a rest. You have to be a real sophisticated reader to do that. You have to be at a college-level stage in order to be able to read that well. This passage is very hard. Some people look at the title and think, "Throwing the Javelin." We told you that successful readers use their prior knowledge in order to be able to read. Many of you don't have any information about that topic at all, so this would be your very first experience in reading a text of this type. As I said to you earlier, you get good at reading things that you practice, so these are also real unfamiliar passages.

Well, how did seventeen-year-olds do? First, let's look to see what was involved. Besides all that I have said to you about decoding and understanding words in the reading process, they had to find the information, comprehend it, summarize it, and explain relatively complicated information. This is a college-level text. Even at that, 41% of students were totally successful.

James Flood:

The last level is called the advanced level. If you will, think for a moment of the black diamond runs on the ski slope. That is what this is about. Somehow or other, this doesn't get reported in the popular press. They wanted an array, the midpoint. The third passage was what was expected. That is what they were really looking at. But, they said, we'll start real low. 100% can do it, and we are going to go real high. Look at this text. This is the last one.

ADVANCED
(Level 350)

Read the passage and answer the questions based on it.

There is a myth, very popular these days, that the Court is divided into "liberal" and "conservative" wings, or, as some would put it, into "activists" and those who practice "judicial restraint." Labels of this kind are convenient but not accurate. Members of the Court, applying general constitutional provisions, understandably differ on occasion as to *their* meaning and application. This is inevitable in the interpretation of a document that is both brief and general by a human institution composed of strong-minded and independent members charged with a grave and difficult responsibility. But the inappropriateness of these labels becomes apparent upon even the most perfunctory analysis.

Level 350, Advanced

What does the word "their" refer to:

- A. Citizens
- B. Conservatives
- C. Liberals
- D. Members of the Court
- E. Provisions
- F. I don't know.

This was the highest level. It says, "There is a myth very popular these days that the court is divided into liberal and conservative wings, or as some would put it, into activists and those who practice judicial restraint. Labels of this kind are convenient but not accurate. Members of the court, applying general constitutional provisions understandably differ on occasion as to their meaning and application. This is inevitable in the interpretation of a document that is both brief and general, by a human institution composed of strong-minded and independent members charged with a grave and difficult responsibility. But the appropriateness, the inappropriateness of these labels becomes apparent upon even the most perfunctory analysis." All right. I think you're getting the point. What this is all about is, this is a graduate-level text, not inappropriate to give to seventeen-year-olds. We want to see if any of them can do it. We really need to know what we're after here since only 4.8% of them could do it. This is like taking somebody who is a skier at a middle stage, and asking them if they want to go down the black diamond runs. The answer is no. That's exactly what

was found about this level. No is the answer. Some of you could answer this. Teachers in America are not satisfied. They are not satisfied with the mid-point. This is what we are really after as teachers. We really need to celebrate the work that teachers do. Teachers are never satisfied, because if we were to accept this, we would be accepting an elitist principle of government. We don't accept that in the United States, this is egalitarian. We are for equality, we are for equity. Teachers say, no, that's not good enough. We want everybody to keep on going, so that all students can read well because teachers believe that literacy allows one choice. That's what we're after.

This first part of our presentation has addressed where we are in terms of how people are doing, how students are doing in reading. Now what we want to do is address is, where have we been?

Diane Lapp:

What we know is that reading instruction has changed to accommodate our new understandings of the reading process, reading instruction and also reading materials. Reading materials now reflect an ever-broadened notion of many different types of texts. What Jim and I want to share with you is a look at the textbooks, the basal readers that are used in our schools, and how they have changed throughout history to accommodate our ever-growing knowledge of the reading process.

Basal texts from a long time ago were very phonetic. The students were asked to identify sounds and words in rhymes. In 1881 reading material was like this. Information was presented out of context. Students were also drilled on grammar, pronunciation, and memorization. Again, this was often done in isolation. Today, the teaching of these skills is done in context. Today, the information that Jim and I have shared with you is being put into a context, to give you examples, to provide metaphors, analogies, so that you can bring to bear all of your prior knowledge and all of the experiences that you've had to make meaning and understand what we are trying to share with you. This use of context exemplifies what is currently occurring in basals.

Early books were also very moral. They were designed to instill morality in the readers. For example, in one pictorial spelling book a little girl who could just reach the top of a table had been drinking from the spout of the teapot but by which means her mouth and throat had been badly scalded. The text warns the reader that "children should beware of scalding water. They should never play about it in a careless manner, for in so doing they are exposed to great danger,"² so you better be a good little child. Etiquette. This is how we develop good little boys—Tommy—and Polly, a good little girl. Early books were designed also to teach etiquette, religion, morning prayers, evening prayers—to instill religion in a fearful way within the children—and to develop the importance of education. As you can see from this passage, this is one of the passages the children were asked to read. This is to help them see how important it was to have an education.

James Flood:

Those were the basal readers, the reader anthologies of long ago. All right, those were the ones that existed in the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. How about us? Let's see what happened during our years. Remember Dick and Jane? Remember we had Dad and Mom. We had the little girl, Baby, doing the somersaults? Who remembers the dog's name? Spot. Those are the readers that we grew up on.

Now, the contemporary basal readers, the reading programs of today, celebrate diversity. They look at many different cultures. We have works by Virginia Hamilton, cultural differences in America. They also include examples of quality literature. *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*, *Cattie Woodlawn*, *Stone Soup*, *Miss Rumpius*, and *Shadow of a Bull*. They also include other pieces of literature like poems, poems by Edna St. Vincent Millay, poems by Jane Yolen. They also include selections from the content areas, from mathematics, from history, from science. We have seen great changes in basal readers and basal reading programs. The times truly have changed. Part of this change has occurred because we continue to learn more about the way that children actually learn to read and the kind of processes that they are involved in while they read.

During this time, we are trying to put into practice all of those notions that we know about the competent reader, that the competent reader is constructive, purposeful, strategic in practice. Well, while those changes are being made, we have also reflected upon some notions about the very core and the very heart of instruction. In the United States, we have used a metaphor for instruction that is called the Diagnostic Prescriptive Metaphor. It comes out of a tradition that is behaviorist and industrial. The notions behind this metaphor are two-fold. One, we believe that there is something wrong and it can be fixed. That's what the diagnostic prescriptive model looks like. We believe something is wrong, we can find what is wrong, and we can fix it. That metaphor for teaching and learning doesn't work. It doesn't work, and we're moving away from it. It doesn't make sense in terms of what we know about learners and what we know about teaching. In more current times, we are moving toward a new metaphor, "Instructional Scaffolding." There is nothing wrong with children. They are not sick. They are developing. Because of this knowledge the new metaphor makes so much more sense. We put up scaffolds where and when necessary. We remove them as soon as we can, because what we are after here is a model in which the teacher and the child work collaboratively, assistance is offered where and when necessary, and assistance is removed when students can function independently, because that is really what good instruction is about.

Diane Lapp:

One of the major areas of instruction utilized by reading instructors is that of encouraging students' personal response. The information that the readers brings to the text, and then how they respond to the passage, the text, the story, the show, or whatever it is that they are looking at, constitutes a personal response. What we have

decided to use to help understand personal response is a little story about something that recently happened to me.

In order for you to understand better, I have to share with you some information about me. As Brad Bartel told you a few minutes ago, I grew up in a northeastern industrial town in Ohio, and that city was—some people call it a town, I call it a big city—that big city was about 50,000 people. It is in northeastern Ohio, on the border of Pennsylvania and West Virginia. If you know about that part of the country, you know that the families who work there work mostly in car industries, in car production plants. They work in coal mines and steel mills. Most of the immigrants who came to that part of the country were of Italian and Irish heritage. I am one of those products. I was born on one of those streets, on July 21st. Something real interesting happened that July because there was another girl born on the very same street July 22nd and another little girl born on the very same street July 23rd, all in the same year. Now, I know that if you are like the three of us, you are wondering what happened on that street the October before. Well, my two buddies, who were my Italian ancestry pals, and I, the little Irish person, used to talk about that when we got to be about twelve or thirteen—"What do you think happened?" Well, I was recently home for one of those ominous class reunions, and my one friend, Maria, said to me, "Diane, I figured it out. I figured it out this October." I said, "What happened? What do you think happened?" She said, "That was the night they turned the clocks back and they had an extra hour." I'm a result of turning back the clock.

Anyhow, on that street we were real happy. The families who came there are still there. When I go back to visit, it's the same old families. Many of the children of my generation, who are now adults, have moved in and taken over the homes of their parents. It is truly the extended family.

When we used to come home from Mass on Sunday morning to that street in Warren, Ohio, everyone was cooking. If you know about Irish and Italian cooks, you know that Irish cooks boiled everything. Where do you think we'd go for breakfast? We would go over to the Italian kids' houses, because there were good things to eat. In those homes their grandmothers, who did not speak English, but who could communicate with us beautifully, were cooking great big pots of gravy. If you grew up in that area, you know that gravy is red sauce. They were making great big pots of spaghetti gravy and homemade bread for our breakfasts. We would have sauce sandwiches, gravy sandwiches. Gravy sandwiches were, as I've said to you, homemade bread and spaghetti sauce.

Well, now, I've come across the country, and I live in southern California. You might have noticed the same thing that I've noticed in southern California. This is where the blondes live. Well, those blondes didn't grow up with me in Ohio, and when I used to read basal readers, I saw that not one kid ever had coal-black hair. All the kids that I grew up with had dark hair and dark eyes. I used to read my books and wonder, where are they? Where do all the blondes live? I found them! They are here in San Diego. They are here in southern California. Now they're my pals.

Recently, I was invited to one of their houses the other night to watch the movie "Moonstruck" on a video. Now, that shows you how out of date I am with my picture shows, because it was my first time to see that movie. As I watched "Moonstruck," which if you can remember is about the family situation, the home, Olympia Dukakis for me was no longer Olympia Dukakis. She was Maria's grandmother. She was where I went on Sunday morning to have my breakfast. At the end of the movie, when the lights got flicked on and somebody said to me, "Hey, Diane, how did you like that show?" I said, "I loved it." I loved that show. Well, somebody else looked over at me, with blond hair and blue eyes, and said, "What could you like about that show? It didn't even have a story to it!" What had happened to me was I had brought to bear on that movie a whole lifetime set of my experiences. I had listened to the story. I had been involved with the story. I had reacted. I had shared my personal response and I was told, you have the wrong personal response. Until recently in public schools that sometimes has happened to our children. We have shared with them a poem, a story, a piece of text, and said to them, "What do you think about this?" When they didn't say the answer that was in the teacher's manual, we said, "Wrong." We weren't as interested in listening to the rationale that they brought to bear on that—the personal experiences that they had, the thinking processes that they went through to make meaning. That's one example that shows you how a reader response, a listener response is really happening today in American public schools because we are beginning to look at learners and look at the experience that they have had and that they have brought to bear.

I think I'm going back to my blonde friend's house and in jest say, "Let's watch that show again to see how well I can relate it to my personal experience." When this happens in classrooms we need to applaud children's attempts at connecting literature and real life experience.

James Flood:

Reader response is a literary theory that makes a lot of sense for contemporary instruction. What we have probably inadvertently done in the past few years is undervalued personal response. If we believe the kinds of things we were saying in the beginning that reading, good reading, is constructive, it's strategic, it's based on who and what you are, we have to value that personal response. There are many critics now, Louise Rosenblatt among them, who suggest that this is really at the core of teaching literature. Well, all sorts of funny things happen to us. Last summer, Diane and I were at a party in La Jolla. Think about a party you recently attended where you were really enjoying yourself. All sorts of funny things happen to you at parties. We were really enjoying ourselves. Oftentimes you go to a party—you're having a great time. Don't think of those obligatory parties. Think of the party where you're having fun. You're at the party, having a great time, and somebody finally says to you, "What do you do?" You say, "I'm a teacher." What do they say? "Ohhh." We're not going to allow that anymore. We are going to square our shoulders and say, "I'm a teacher."

Well, this is one of the other things that happens at parties. We were at this party, and we were enjoying meeting people, and so on. We knew there was somebody who was after us. You know, you just know sometimes at a party somebody is after you—boom boomp, boom boomp, boom boomp, boom boomp, boom boomp, running after us, boom. He slams into us in the dining room, and he says, "Are you Jim Flood and Diane Lapp?" We said, "Yeah." He said, "You professors of teacher education?" We said, "Yeah." He said, "You know what I think?" Well, remember in the beginning when we told you that teachers and strategic readers have voices inside their heads? You know what our inner voice said. Our outer voice said, "No, what do you think?" He said, "I've lived in California for twenty-five years. I've lived through Man a Course of Study as the core of the curriculum." He said, "I've lived through the New Math." He said, "Whatever happened to that Bay area writing project stuff? I lived through that, too." He said, "Now I hear literature is going to be the core of the curriculum. What is this all about?" He went on to say, "I can't believe we're wasting our time on all of this literature. We're so far behind the Japanese, I think we should stop doing literature in school. We should only do math and science." He went further and said, "Why are we doing all of this storybook stuff anyway?" It was not a rhetorical question. Well, I guess I can honestly say we flubbed it. We are now ready to give our answer. What would your answer be? Why are we teaching literature in school? What is this about? We thought about it, we pondered, we reflected, and this is what we want to say. We want him to walk right through the door and we want to say to him, "It is through literature that we invite every child to participate in the aggregated wisdom of civilization. That is what it's all about." That's what we want to tell him. It is through literature that we allow children to embark upon a personal journey of exploration. It is through a reader response methodology that we allow children to figure out who they are, where they fit in, how life is meaningful for them. It is through literature that they go on vast journeys. They meet people they have never met before. They go to lands they'll never dream of visiting. They meet all sorts of people through literature. You know, certain things have happened to us in our lives that we rarely reflect on over and over again. One of the things that happened to me in my life—I remember this distinctly. I was eleven years old. I was eleven years old, and many of you know my brother's in the audience. He is five years older than I. He was sixteen years old. He was a wonderful reader. He was a terrific reader, and he was reading a book that summer. He was a very, very fast reader. He was reading one of these novels that you read when you're sixteen. He was reading this book, and I was fascinated with it, because he kept going on and on and on. He started talking about Jebb and Scout and Atticus. It sounded interesting to me, but I didn't pay much attention. But I couldn't believe how long this book took him to read. I remember asking him, "You know, you're such a fast reader. Why is this book taking you so long?" He said to me, "I don't want to end this book. I don't want it to end. I don't want my friends to go away." Oooohhh. That's what literature does for us. That's what it is about. It's about meeting new people who stay with us for a very long time. If we don't value that

personal response that children bring to the task of reading, in a lot of ways, we've missed a wonderful opportunity. We have to start where the reader is.

You remember in the *Incendiary* poem, you couldn't start with talking about meter and form and structure. You have to start talking about where you are. Everyone of us says, "Whoa, I know a kid like that." We have to start there. Then we move off that. We start this way, very big, and we move inward. That's what reader response is about. What we thought we'd do is just share with you an opportunity to actually experience this.

Diane Lapp:

Old Horse was the algebra teacher at the school where I teach. I don't remember his real name any more, but he had a long face with big square teeth, and so the students called him Old Horse. Perhaps they would have liked him more if he hadn't been so sarcastic. With his cutting remarks Old Horse could force the most brazen student to stare at the floor in silence. Even the faculty had a healthy respect for his sharp tongue.

One day a boy named Jenkins flared back at Old Horse. "But I don't understand this," said Jenkins pointing to a part of the problem on the board.

"I'm doing the best I can considering the material I have to work with," said Old Horse.

"Well, you're trying to make a jackass out of me," said Jenkins, his face turning red.

James Flood:

"But Jenkins, you make it so easy for me," said Old Horse.

And Jenkins eyes retreated to the floor.

Old Horse retired shortly after I joined the faculty. Something went wrong with his liver or his stomach, and so he left. No one heard from him again. One day, however, not too long before Old Horse left, a new boy came to school. Because he had buck teeth and a harelip, everybody called him "Rabbit." No one seemed to like Rabbit much either. Most of the time he stood by himself chewing his fingernails. Since Rabbit came to school in the middle of October, he had make-up work to do in algebra every day after school. Old Horse was surprisingly patient during these sessions. He would explain anything Rabbit asked. Rabbit, in turn, always did his homework. In fact, he came early to class if he could manage it, then after the lesson he would walk with Old Horse to the parking lot.

Diane Lapp:

One Friday because of a faculty meeting, Old Horse didn't meet with Rabbit. This afternoon I walked with Old Horse. We were passing the athletic field when suddenly he stopped and pointed.

"What's the matter with that one?" he asked. He was referring to Rabbit standing

alone chewing his fingernails while watching some other boys pass around a football.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"Well, why doesn't he play ball, too?" Old Horse demanded.

"Oh, you know how it is. He came in later than the others, and besides . . ."

"Besides what?"

"Well, he's different, you know. He'll fit in sooner or later."

"No. No. That won't do. They musn't leave him out like that."

Then we had to break off the conversation because Rabbit had hurried over to join us. With a smile he walked beside his teacher, asking him questions. Suddenly, one of the boys from the athletic field called, out, "Yeaaaa, Old Horse. Yeaaaa, Old Horse." Then he threw back his head and went, "Wheeeee," like a horse's whinny.

James Flood:

Rabbit's face reddened with embarrassment. Old Horse tossed his head, but said nothing.

The next day one of the students from my fifth-hour class came to my room awfully excited. Old Horse had gone too far. They said he ought to be fired. When I asked what had happened, they said he had picked on Rabbit. He had called on Rabbit first thing and had deliberately made him look ridiculous. Apparently Rabbit had gone to the board with confidence, but when he began to put down some numbers, Old Horse said they looked like animal tracks in snow. Everyone snickered, and Rabbit got nervous. Then Old Horse taunted him for a mistake in arithmetic.

"No, no, no. Can't you multiply now? Even a rabbit can do that."

Everyone laughed, although they were surprised. They thought Rabbit was Old Horse's pet. By now Rabbit was so mixed up he just stood there chewing his fingernails.

"Don't nibble," Old Horse shouted. "Those are your fingers, boy, not carrots."

At that Rabbit took his seat without being told and put his red face in his hands. But the class wasn't laughing anymore. They were silent with anger at Old Horse.

Diane Lapp:

I went in to see Old Horse after my last class. I found him looking out the window.

"Now listen here . . ." I began, but he waved me into silence.

"Now, now. Look at that. See." He pointed to Rabbit walking to the athletic field with one of the boys who complained about how mean Old Horse had been.

"Doesn't he have a special class with you now?" I asked after a moment.

"He doesn't need that class with me anymore," said Old Horse.

That afternoon I walked with Old Horse to the parking lot. He was in one of his impatient moods and so I didn't try to say much. Suddenly from the players on the athletic field, a wild chorus broke out. "Yeaaaa, Old Horse. Yeaaaa, Old Horse." Then Rabbit, who was with them, stretched his long neck, and screamed, "Wheeeee." Old Horse tossed his head as if a large black fly were bothering him, but he said

nothing and walked to his car.

James Flood:

If you will, would you just turn to the person sitting next to you and tell that person how you felt about this experience. Explain what you think of Old Horse. [Talking overheard in audience.] How many of you thought Old Horse was a hero and a saint, a martyr if you will? Please, raise your hands. How many of you thought Old Horse was a villain? As you realize from your raised hands, there isn't a right answer. Where you are right now is very important, because where you are is who you are. This reflects your values, your principles, all of the things that you hold dear are going to determine how you evaluate Old Horse. What's important in this methodology, then, is we give you time to think about who you are in terms of this whole process. Now, if we had the right format, what we would do then is ask people, "What do you think? What do you think? What do you think?" What would happen is that your opinions would get expanded by interacting with each other. This is an example of the value of personal response. Effective instruction begins with who the person is. This encourages one to make meaning, to construct meaning, and then we move on from there to all sorts of issues like, can you prove that in the text? What documentation do you have? What evidence do you have? We don't start there; we finish there. That's what reader response is all about.

Diane Lapp:

Please turn to the second page of your hand-out, and you'll see that we will next discuss reading assessment. Reading assessment is currently being designed in states to accommodate the type of processes, thinking processes that one engages in when reading. You'll remember a few minutes ago when we were sharing with you some of the National Assessment data. Even though you were involved in very complex processes when you were reading or making meaning from the text, some of the questions asked you for specific, minute types of information. Well, that's important. But there are other thinking processes that are equally important to comprehend. There are the thinking processes that you just went through in order to come up with a response to the question that Jim asked you, "Did you think that Old Horse was an effective teacher?" Many processes happened in your mind in order to answer. Statewide assessments and also the National Assessment are being redesigned to reflect some of those things that we now understand about how readers think. Tests must assess the strategies that are going on in the minds of the readers. Assessment must address the background knowledge that the reader brings to the task of reading, the processes involved in constructing meaning, the knowledge of the reading process. If I said to you, "What did you do when I was reading you that passage or when you are reading a passage to yourself? What went on in your mind? What kind of strategies were you using?" You know many things about how you process information. You know when you have a breakdown in a text and what you do to go

find other pieces of information in order to facilitate your understanding of that text. These are things that new tests must emphasize. Your attitude toward reading also needs to be addressed through assessment measures. Do you like it? Jim has been talking to you about aliteracy this afternoon, and aliteracy is real, real, real, real important. Because if you like to read, if you develop a positive attitude about reading, you practice reading. You realize that most of the things that you are good at, developed because you took many, many, many hours of practice to get that good. Assessments to address all of these issues are being developed and used at classroom levels.

James Flood:

The world is really changing, both in terms of what we know about reading and the way that we are assessing and testing it. This is a national movement. People are talking about this in all states. It has become a matter of such major interest that there've been governors' conferences and state legislatures meeting to discuss it. They're talking about how to redesign the tests so that we can come up with measures that make some sense. Attempts are being made to determine what a person's prior knowledge is and how this affects being able to read a text. It is difficult to develop such sophisticated tests. The field of assessment is only in the exploratory stages. Educators are in the stages right now of gathering the data to figure out how to develop such tests. It's very difficult. It's timely. It's going to cost a lot of energy. It's going to cost a lot of money in order to be able to do it.

In addition, educators are also very interested in portfolio assessment. In the past, we've used a unitary score, oftentimes a single score, to assess how well students were doing. This type of assessment is problematic because it is a single norm-referenced score that is terribly misleading. There are many poor test takers, and there are many good test takers. If we use a single test score that is what it is, a single test score. That's all it is. Performance assessment allows a wider look at how well students are doing. We need a broader view of how well our students are performing. We need to think of a portfolio of assessment. If you are an artist, or a dancer, or a musician, you have a whole portfolio (See Figure 1). You don't show a single picture. You show a lot of pictures that you photographed. Using this as an example, educators are addressing these new issues through portfolio assessments which might include both norm-referenced and criterion-referenced test scores as one piece of information. In addition, informal measures including writing samples might be included. Also included might be voluntary reading programs which address how many books one has read. This seems to be the real measure of how well we're doing. Are kids using libraries? Are they buying books? Are they reading books? Let's also include self-assessments. How well does one think they're doing? How reflective are they being on the process? How about some sample materials that are being used in the school? For example, something that could get included in a portfolio assessment might be something like this.

If you look at the two graphs on the bottom in Figure 2, the bottom line, what we have is the number of books read by the child over the course of the year. Note that in September the child read one book, October two books, November two books, December one book. If you just had the bottom line, it would look as though we had failed here again. If we address both things simultaneously, look at this line going up here. We have ever-increasing amounts. That's what we're really after. How can we demonstrate that progress is being made? Portfolio assessment cannot be compiled without the student. We need the teacher; we need the student. This is being talked about at every level. It is being talked about at the university level. You know, how do we really assess? How do we really make sense? A single score in a National Teacher Assessment paper-and-pencil test doesn't make a whole lot of sense. I mean, somebody could sit down and take a pencil-and-paper test; they may or may not be a good teacher. We want a much bigger measure than that.

Remember in high school or in college, where you had a very, very difficult course? Perhaps it was a course in mathematics, calculus, for instance. You believe you were learning a lot, but you could never crack a C. Remember this course? You were learning. Each quarter you worked really hard at this. You got a C in November. You really worked hard. You got a C in January. You worked hard again. You got a C in April, a C in June. Well, to the outside world, it looked like you were flat. You never learned anything. You got a C the first time. You never learned anything more. You knew you had learned a whole lot more. What we really need, then, is to say to the world, "Look, look at the material. The material grows. We didn't stop here. We learned more. We learned more." That course grade of C doesn't demonstrate all of the things that happen within a course. In a portfolio assessment we could do something like this. For a first grader, for instance, at the beginning of first grade, children can usually read things like, "Hop, Pop. We like to hop. We like to hop on top of pop." That's from *Hop on Pop* from Dr. Seuss and is illustrated on the left half of Figure 3. Oftentimes by the end of first grade, children are reading texts that look like the right half of Figure 3. "Then he tried to find his way straight across the garden, but he became more and more puzzled. Presently he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his water can"—from *Peter Rabbit* by Beatrix Potter. I think what you see here is if we included this kind of material in the portfolio, we would have a much broader picture of what students were capable of doing. Portfolio assessment is a thought we are really going to have to deal with during this next decade.

Diane Lapp:

The third set of information that we would like to share with you is our look into the future in education. We are suggesting four areas of future growth. These areas are based on educational research. The first one is that contemporary research findings lead us to endorse two notions about teachers. The first is that teachers are scholars. Think about this for second. What percentage of the American population do you think has a Bachelor's degree? Come on; it's a great big number. Sixty-five?

Figure 1

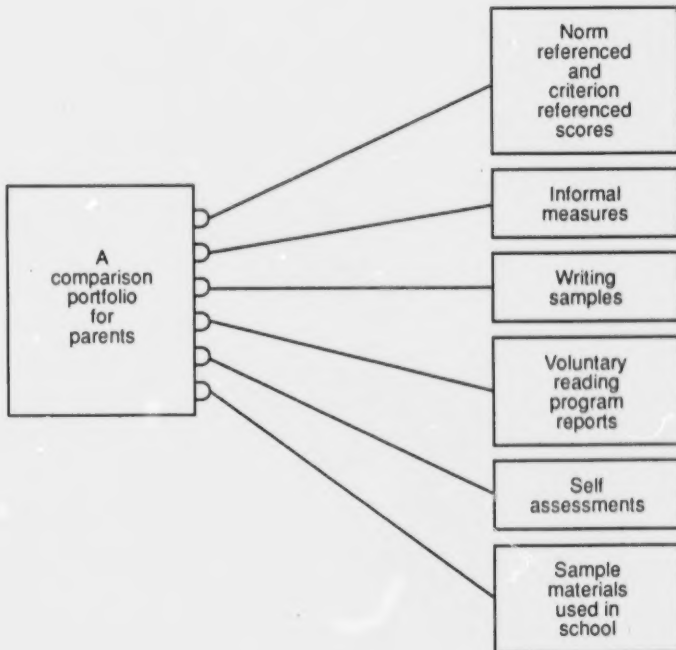


Figure 2
Chart showing a child's growth in voluntary reading

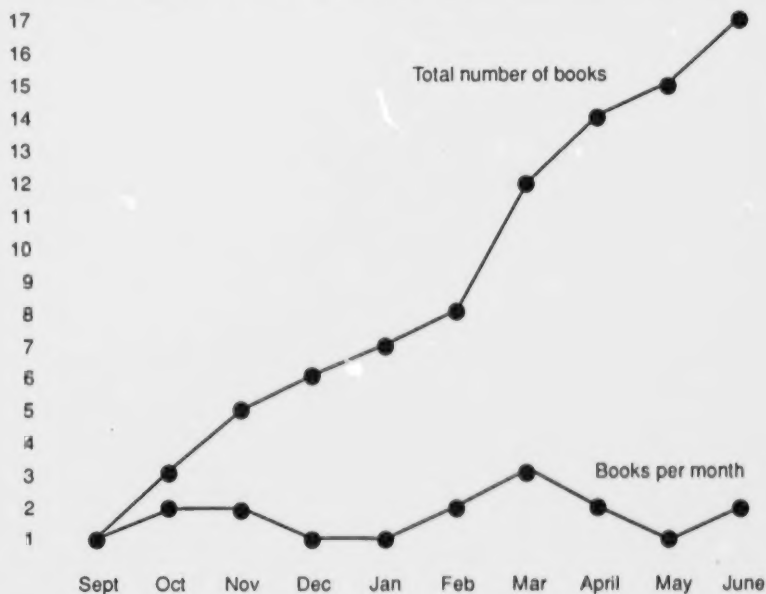


Figure 3
Text samples showing a 1st grader's reading growth

Read in an early month	Read 6 months later
HOP	Then he tried to find his way straight across the garden, but he became more and more puzzled. Presently, he came to a pond where Mr. McGregor filled his water-cans. A white cat was staring at some gold-fish; she sat very, very still, but now and then the tip of her tail twitched as if it were alive. Peter thought it best to go away without speaking to her; he had heard about cats from his cousin, little Benjamin Bunny.
POP	
We like to hop.	
We like to hop on top of Pop.	
From <i>Hop on Pop</i> by Dr. Seuss.	From <i>Peter Rabbit</i> by Beatrix Potter.

12.9% of the population has a Bachelor's degree. That's an entry-level requirement in California to be a school teacher. What percentage do you think has a Master's degree? 2.9% Most teachers who leave a teacher-education institution in California have a Master's degree or have almost completed a Master's degree. In most other states across the country, you have five years to get a Master's degree. Teachers are real smart. Teachers always are people who liked school. They did real well in school, no matter what the subject. Teachers mostly got A's and B's in school. In fact, many of them even liked to take tests. They did real well at it. [Laughter] See, your secrets. They're inquisitive. They're curious. They're thinkers. They are also real patient people, because they put up with all of the public standing at their school door telling them how to run their classrooms. You know, most people think that they know how to do this because didn't they go to school? They have a lot of investment in the school, and they try to tell the teachers how to run it. We also, from the research findings, not only believe that teachers are scholars, but that teachers need to be empowered to continue to do the jobs that they are doing so well. It is obvious that they are doing so well when you see how they're closing the gap on illiteracy and how they are lessening the number of school dropouts.

James Flood:

Our second recommendation is that contemporary research findings suggest a need for an ever-widening definition of the concept of "Being Literate." You know, if we go back to that data that we showed you in the beginning, several things were happening there. I think that teachers are people who are never satisfied. They want to do better and better for their students. We don't want to leave off. We're not even happy with 86% of the students being able to read at the intermediate level. We are very unhappy with only 4.5% being able to read at the advanced level. We keep wanting to go up that mountain, that challenge. Well, I think part of that is very logical and makes a whole lot of sense, because the literacy demands of today for 1990 are not going to be the literacy demands of tomorrow. For the children in our schools there is going to be a much greater demand of literacy. What we really need to create, then, are independent thinkers and independent learners who will move on, who will be able to stretch and reach and learn what they'll need for those literacy demands. We also want to make a point here in stressing the notion that being literate is very wide. It's for home, under what circumstances, under what conditions. It's not a static phenomenon. In this world, we need lots of different people doing lots of different things. Being literate means many, many different things. We have to keep widening our definition and our understanding of what that might mean.

The third recommendation is that contemporary research findings lead us toward the following recommendations for effective instruction: the first of these is that wide, self-selected, independent reading must be a prominent objective in reading instruction. Oooh. This is different from what we've done before. We thought it was enough to teach children how to decode. We thought that was enough. It isn't. That's

not enough. What we want now in schools is to have children become independent readers who read widely, who read broadly. Remember in the beginning we talked about you. We talked about you as the competent comprehender. We talked about you as the meaning maker. What is it that you do? Our message today is really a simple one. You're competent readers. Our message is this: We want to make all children in our schools exactly like you. We want to make them as you are. How are you? You're curious, you're inquisitive, you're scholarly, you're insightful. That's what we'd like to have happen for all students.

Tell us more about yourself. Well, here are some things that are sort of interesting. Think for a moment about yourself as a wide reader. Diane explained before all of the different kinds of things we read. We read newspapers every day. We read musical notes, we read invitations, we read maps, we read charts. Recently we read those 1040 forms. We read them with different levels of proficiency to be sure, but we do read widely and broadly. Some of our happiest times are when we have leisure times, and we wander around the bookstore. That's who we are. That's who all of us are. We're very happy there. That's what we want for children. We want children to take the League of Women Voters pamphlet and study it before going into the ballot box. That doesn't happen automatically. That only happens when we have as an objective to make kids wide readers, that they read lots of things. If we reduce all of that to a single score in a norm-referenced test, it's not going to work. We have to have new notions of assessment that suggest that it's really important to look at all of the different kinds of things that one is reading—wide reading. Wide reading is very important.

The second recommendation under point C is that the needs of all students must be met as our society becomes increasingly more diverse. We know in California and we know nationally the United States is becoming even more culturally diverse, even more linguistically diverse. We are a diverse country. We want to celebrate that diversity. We in education believe in the principles of equality. We believe in the principles of equity. We want to educate every child. You know, those numbers come as no surprise to us, and we know who's not scoring. What we want to do—we're not satisfied. We want to continue to try to educate every single child, and we want to celebrate that diversity. In our lifetime as teachers—and we're all teachers in one way or another—we come in contact with many, many different kinds of people, and we want to teach them all. We want to get them all to that advanced level. We even meet some children who Shel Silverstein tells us about who are like this. We want to meet all different kinds of people. We even want to meet a child like this. The prayer of the selfish child: "Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep, and if I die before I wake, I pray the Lord my toys to break, so none of the other kids can use them." Lots of people out there—we want to educate them all.

Diane Lapp:

Finally, as we've been saying to you, we want to expand and broaden the reading horizons for every child. The following quote tells you why we think books are so

important:

Books are no substitute for living, but they can add immeasurably to its richness. When life is absorbing, books can enhance our sense of significance. When life is difficult, they can give us momentary relief from trouble or a new insight into our problems, or provide the rest and refreshment we need. Books have always been a source for information, comfort, and pleasure for people who know how to use them. [May Hill Arbuthnot]

Through our readings we have met many friends. Through the books that we read we've met many friends. What we would like to do now is to have you look at some of the friends whom we've met and see if some of them are also your friends. [Music playing in background—"That's What Friends Are For"—while slides of children having many different reading experiences are shown.] Thank you for sharing today with us.

Questions:

Could you explain aliteracy a little bit more. How is it affecting our society? What does it mean? The potential?

James Flood:

Illiteracy or aliteracy?

Question:

Aliteracy.

James Flood:

Okay, the question is could we explain a little bit more about aliteracy and how it's affecting our society. The answer is that it is an issue of practice and frequency. If people can, it means they learn how to do it; they know how to read. But if they don't do it, they don't get very good at it. It's like any other skill. If it's unpracticed, one does not do it well. Once you start practicing it, you get very good at it, and hopefully, you enjoy doing it and you do a lot more of it so that you actually broaden what it is that you read. We hope that that translates into issues of citizenry. You know, if you

become a better reader, you read more difficult things. You read papers that are about issues that are complex, and you really start gathering information so that your decision making processes actually change because you've been given a lot more information.

Thomas Day:

I would like to thank you for your attendance today, and by the way this lecture will be available and published through San Diego State Press. Again, thank you for today.

Notes

¹All questions or examples of questions are excerpted from the National Assessment of Educational Progress 1969-1983.

²Excerpted from *The Pictorial Spelling Book*, circa 1900.

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